

Virginia Recreational Trails Fund Program

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Planning and Recreational Resources
203 Governor Street, Suite 326
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2010



VIRGINIA RECREATIONAL TRAILS FUND PROGRAM

The Virginia Recreational Trails Fund Program is a grant program established for the purposes of providing and maintaining recreational trails and trails-related facilities. It is funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which establishes a program for allocating funds to the States for recreational trails and trail-related projects. The state agency responsible for administering the program in Virginia is the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

Grant funding may be provided to private organizations, city governments, county governments, or other government entities, but must consider guidance from the DCR Trails Board. Additionally, federal government entities may be eligible to participate if teamed with private trail groups and organizations.

An optimum 30% of the trail program funds will be used for motorized recreational trail uses, and 30% will be used for non-motorized recreational trails uses. 40% of trail funds must be given to project proposals with the greatest number of compatible recreational purposes and/or provide for innovative recreational trail corridor sharing (multiple-use trails). This is a **reimbursement** program, meaning that the sponsoring agency should be capable of financing the project while requesting periodic reimbursements. All project applications must have a **20% (minimum)** sponsor match in total cost. **Planning proposals for future facilities are not eligible.**

Grant applications that receive tentative grant approval will be required to submit to DCR, within 60 days, written environmental review comments from the following state agencies:

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Impact Review, 629 East Main Street, 6th Floor, Richmond, Virginia 23219, (804) 698-4330

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221, (804) 367-2323

Review comments from the Department of Conservation and Recreation will be coordinated and handled by the DCR staff.

Costs of reviews are reimbursable if the project receives final approval and is completed in accordance with the grant application.

The application deadline is March 4, 2005. For further information regarding the grant program, please call (804) 786-3218 or (804) 786-4379.

Applications should be sent to:

**Virginia Recreational Trails Fund Program
Department of Conservation and Recreation
203 Governor Street, Suite 326
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PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Permitted Uses:

A grant recipient may use monies received under this Act for:

- Development of urban trail linkages near homes and workplaces.
- Maintenance of existing recreational trails, including the grooming and maintenance of trails across snow.
- Restoration of recreational trails and back country terrain damaged by usage.
- Development of trailside and trailhead facilities including water trails that meet goals identified by the National Recreation Trails Committee. This includes trial components or associated facilities which serve the purpose and safe use of the recreational trail, and may include, but are not limited to the following: drainage, crossings, stabilization, parking, signage, controls, shelters, water, sanitary, and access facilities.
- Provision of features that facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities.
- Easement acquisition for trails or for trail corridors identified in a state or local trail plan.
- Acquisition of fee simple title to property from a willing seller, when the objective of the acquisition cannot be accomplished by acquisition of an easement of by other means.
- Construction of new trails that meet identified needs on state, county, municipal, or private lands.
- Construction of new trails crossing on federal lands if such proposals are supported by the *Virginia Outdoors Plan*, applicable federal land management plans, and generally, state and federal management agencies responsible for compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

Uses not permitted:

A grant recipient may not use monies received under this Act for:

- Condemnation of any kind of interest in property.
- Upgrading, expanding, or otherwise facilitating motorized use or access to trails that prior to May 1, 1991, were predominantly used by non-motorized trail users, and on which motorized use was either prohibited or had not occurred.
- Planning proposals for future eligible trail facilities.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Grant applications will be classified as rehabilitation, new, or a Combination of these two classes:

Rehabilitation Projects

Projects that significantly contribute to the renovation and improvement of existing trail corridors, especially those trails where intensive use has caused resource deterioration or where storm damage has occurred.

New Construction Projects

Proposals that involve construction of new trails or support facilities

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Project Need

- Linkages provided to other trails, population areas, parks and open space, facilities and services
- Urgency for the project (lost opportunity)
- Availability of similar facilities
- Unique characteristics, including: recreational, scenic, environmental and historic content
- Expected usage
- Inclusion in a plan(s) – approved and otherwise

Project Innovation

- Shared usage (simultaneous multi-use and seasonal)
- Design
- Maintenance
- Conservation of natural resources
- Public safety

Design Parameters

- Environmental and historic issues addressed
- Safety issues addressed
- Access and user needs incorporated, including needs of persons with disabilities
- Design standards used
- Provisions for trails-related facilities

Population Served

- Demographics
- User groups served
- Compatibility of uses
- Project appropriateness to needs of population served

Support of Project

- Community support/opposition
- Partnerships
- User support
- Funding support from other organizations and agencies
- Interagency cooperation

Provisions for the project's continuing existence

- Maintenance and operations plans
- Education and public involvement
- Availability of use

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The National Recreational Trails Program recommends that not less than 30% of the monies received annually be reserved for uses relating to motorized recreation and not less than 30% be reserved for uses relating to non-motorized recreation. To ensure diversified trail use, the remaining 40% must be used for both motorized and non-motorized uses, but preference will be given to projects with the greatest number of compatible recreational purposes and/or that provide recreational corridor sharing.

GRANT CATEGORIES

1. Grants will be considered for proposals, which provide new or improved **non-motorized** recreational trail use (could be single use).
2. Grants will be considered for proposals, which provide new or improved **diversified** projects (multi-use trails) with compatible recreational purposes and/or provide for innovative recreational trail corridor sharing and/or significant new connector trails to existing trail corridors.
3. Grants will be considered for proposals to develop new **motorized** trails and/or provide for diversified motorized use projects of compatible recreational purposes and/or significant new connector trails to existing trail corridors.

RANGE OF GRANT AMOUNTS

80% grant amounts will be considered on project proposals. The maximum grant award is **\$100,000** (\$125,000 total cost), and the minimum grant award is **\$20,000** (\$25,000 total cost). In previous grant awards, the average grant award has been \$55,000 (total cost \$68,750).

MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED

National Recreational Trail grant funds cannot exceed **80%** of total project cost. The remaining 20% matching cost must come from the sponsor organization and/or governmental entity. Allowable costs can include donation of private funds, materials, equipment and services at fair market value, and charges incurred by government entities. Other allowable costs are land acquisition, materials, equipment, services and force account (in-kind labor) approved specifically for the project. Some matching funds from other federal sources and agencies are allowed under certain conditions. The value of donated labor and materials cannot serve as a total match for a trail proposal, but can be a portion of the total project cost. The maximum grant amount must not exceed 80% of total cost including donated value of materials and labor. The actual grant amount allowed will vary based on the amount of actual dollars spent, including force account or government work forces, on the project. In summary, no matter what the value of the donated materials and labor, the grant reimbursement cannot exceed the value of actual dollars spent or exceed 80% of the total project cost.

Total Project Cost	<u>\$40,000</u>
Cost of materials, service	20,000
Cost of city/county work forces (Force Account)	12,000
Value of private volunteer labor	8,000
Combined cost of trail project	\$40,000

Maximum grant payable share would be 80% of project cost **\$32,000**

(In this proposal, the sponsor actually spent \$32,000 on materials, services and work forces, and then added the volunteer labor to the local match to receive the full grant reimbursement of \$32,000.)

Total Project Cost	<u>\$40,000</u>
Cost of materials, service	8,000
Cost of city/county work forces (Force Account)	8,000
Value of donated materials	12,000
Value of private volunteer labor	12,000
Combined cost of trail project	\$40,000

Maximum grant payable share would be **\$16,000**

(In this proposal, the value of the donated materials and labor exceeded the grant amount. Hence, the maximum payables grant amount is \$16,000 or the cost of materials, services and work forces.)

Donated materials and/or labor may be used toward the match, but reimbursements are limited to **80%** of the total project budget or paid expenditures whichever is less.

This is a reimbursement program; therefore, the grant recipient must pay 100% of the cost of any item before submitting a request for reimbursement for eligible costs.

A request for reimbursement may not be submitted to DCR for less than 25% of the total grant amount. The final 25% of the total grant amount may be withheld until the project is completed as determined by DCR. Reimbursements will be made only for those items that were listed on the Project Application and Agreement. **All** reimbursement requests will require certification signed by the chief administrative or financial officer of the grant recipient that the expenditures are proper and in compliance with the National Recreational Trails Act, the Department of Transportation, and applicable regulations under 49 CFR, the Virginia Recreational Trail Fund Fiscal Procedures; and that the cost incurred is for work which meets acceptable standards for the construction and/or rehabilitation of trails. Normally, requests for reimbursements are processed and funds dispersed within 30 days.

The Grant Process

- Eligible grant applications will be received by the DCR until **March 4, 2005**.
- Projects will be reviewed by DCR staff for eligibility. Eligible projects will be forwarded to the DCR Trail Advisory Board for review and recommendation.
- Projects will be selected based on criteria developed by DCR and the Board. Projects will be funded in conformance with the FHWA Recreational Trails Fund Program.
- Under existing law, projects are subject to archaeological and historic review. Projects selected for qualified grant approval will be submitted for review by DCR. Cost of any additional surveys will be borne by the applicant.
- Project applicants will receive approval or disapproval on all application submissions. Projects receiving approval will be included in DCR's application to the FHWA. Upon receipt of the FHWA approval, applicants will receive a Project Agreement to execute.
- Upon receipt and approval of a fully executed project agreement, the grant recipient may initiate activities to undertake the approved scope of work. All costs incurred by a grant recipient prior to receipt of a fully executed project agreement will be **ineligible** for funding reimbursement.
- During the course of the project, grant recipients seeking reimbursement shall be required to submit the proper documentation. Fiscal procedures and required forms will be distributed to approved grant recipients detailing the requirements necessary for requesting reimbursement.
- The completion date for the project will be set in the project agreement. In most cases, approved projects must be completed within two years. Requests for an extension of time will be considered with proper justification.

- DCR must be notified of a project completion. 25% of reimbursable grant monies may be withheld pending completion certification by the grant recipient and final approval of project completion by DCR.

GRANT AWARD CONDITIONS

Prior to receiving a copy of a fully executed project agreement from DCR, applicants must furnish copies of required documents related to:

- **Environmental Impact Review**
Grant applications that receive tentative grant approval will be required to submit to DCR, within 60 days, written environmental review comments from the following state agencies:

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Impact Review, 629 East Main Street, 6th Floor, Richmond, Virginia 23219, (804) 698-4330

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221, (804) 367-2323,
http://www.dhr.state.va.us/review/section_106.htm
- **Work on Public Lands**
Organizations and individuals receiving grant approval for work on public lands will be required to enter into a separate agreement with the land managing agency(s) to undertake the work.
- **Work on Private Lands**
Any grant recipient receiving approval for work on private lands must enter into an easement or other legally binding agreement with the landowner that ensures public access to the recreation trails.
- **Permits or Other Approvals**
All permits or other approvals that may be required as a result of the activities proposed under this project must be obtained from the appropriate agencies.
- **Federal Requirements**
Grant recipients receiving approval to acquire an easement or purchase land in fee simple will be required to comply with the terms of TITLE II and TITLE III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 and the applicable requirement and procedures implementing such Act and other provisions of federal laws and executive orders as identified under the Project Agreement and General Provisions.
- **Resolution of Support from administering agency's board/council.**

- Letter from local Planning District Commission indicating review and support for the project.

VIRGINIA RECREATIONAL TRAILS FUND PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
PROJECT APPLICATION

1. Applicant: _____

2. Address: _____

3. Contact Person: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

4. Government Agency: State Local Federal /partnership Regional
 Non-profit organization Other: _____

5. Indicate Grant Category: (see page 5) _____

6. Name of Trail Project: _____

7. Land Classification: Public Private Combination

8. a. Location(s) of Project: _____

b. U.S. Congressional District # _____ Virginia House District # _____
 Virginia Senate District # _____

9. Trail Use: Motorized Non-motorized Combination

10. List all types of uses:

Hiking/walking/strolling	Four wheel driving
Cross-country skiing	Equestrian
Motorcycling	Bicycling
Jogging/running	ATV
Other (specify) _____	

11. Description of Project: Describe, in this space, the scope of work and/or anticipated accomplishments: _____

12. Type of Project and Quantitative Measures: (Please indicate in acres, miles, linear feet, square feet, or other unit of measurement)

<i>Indicate Type(s) of Application Project:</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
_____ New trail Construction	_____
_____ Rehabilitation of areas damaged by usage	_____
_____ Maintenance	_____
_____ Development of trail-side and trail-head facilities	_____
_____ Acquisition	_____
_____ Fee Simple	_____
_____ Easement	_____

13. Project Construction Information:

How much time will be required to complete the project once the approval agreement is signed? (Estimate time in years/months) _____

14. Ownership: Who will own and maintain the completed project?

Own: _____

Maintain: _____

15. Estimated Total Budget:

Design and engineering costs incurred
after signed project agreement:

Direct labor costs:

Equipment rental:

Construction costs:

Material costs:

Total Project Cost:

Total Grant Cost:

Must not exceed 80% of total project cost

Matching Cost:

Cash: (Includes paid municipal work)

Private Source Donation:

Cash:

Labor and/or Materials

Volunteer work value (usually minimum wage) should be approved and documented
prior to commencing work.

Total Matching Cost:

Must be 20% or more of total project cost

NARRATIVE

Please use no more than 3 typed pages to explain how the project meets the following project selection criteria. If criterion does not apply, enter N/A.

1. If a rehabilitation project, describe current condition and proposed solutions. Photographs of damaged areas should be included.
2. Describe why the project is needed. Include linkages provided, urgency, availability of similar facilities, unique characteristics, expected usage, and inclusion in any plans.
3. Describe how the project is innovative. Include innovative shared usage, design, maintenance, conservation, and public safety features.

4. Describe whom the project will serve. Include demographics; user groups served, seasonal usages, compatibility of uses.
5. Describe support of the project. Include community support and an explanation of opposition, partnerships, user group support, funding support from other organizations, and interagency cooperation. Attach letters of support, if applicable.
6. Describe the design parameters. Include how environmental and safety issues will be addressed, access and user needs incorporated, design standards used, and trail facilities provided.
7. Describe what provisions there are for the project's continuing existence. Include how it will be maintained, who will be responsible, and how the public will be encouraged to use and support the project.

General Application Information:

Two (2) original application should be sent to the Department of Conservation and Recreation. It is important that applications be one-sided pages. All pages must be **8-1/2 /11**. Photographs are acceptable including digital images. All photos and images and their captions must be mounted on **8-1/2 /11** paper and be of quality suitable for reproduction by photocopier. Images and photos will not be returned.

The application should also include the following **8-1/2 /11** size documents:

- A Site Plan
- A **U.S. Geological 7.5 Minute Survey Map** (Note: required for review)
- A Resolution and Letters of Support/Cooperative Agents indicating evidence of local support

Environmental Survey

This survey is a requirement for funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). *Please complete all items except 4f, 5a, 5b and 5c, which will be completed by DCR.* Only those projects selected for funding will be submitted to the FHWA for their approval.

1. **Name of Applicant/Project:** _____
2. **Land Use:**
 - a. Briefly describe the land use in the project area. Attach a land use map if needed.

 - b. Is the project consistent with development plans for the area? Yes _____ No _____
 - c. Name of plan: _____
3. **Socioeconomic:** Will the proposed project negatively impact any other the following:

	Y	N		Y	N
a. Health/Education Facilities	_____	_____	e. Public Facilities	_____	_____
b. Emergency Service Providers	_____	_____	f. Local Tax Base	_____	_____
c. Handicapped, Minorities, or Elderly	_____	_____	g. Residential Areas	_____	_____
d. Economic Activity	_____	_____			
4. **Natural Resources:** Will the proposed project negatively impact any of the following:

	Y	N		Y	N
a. Soil Erosion or Sedimentation	_____	_____	g. Vegetation	_____	_____
b. Streams, Rivers, or Lakes	_____	_____	h. Wetlands	_____	_____
c. Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat	_____	_____	i. Floodplains	_____	_____
d. Wild and Scenic Rivers	_____	_____	j. Coastal Zones	_____	_____
e. National Natural Landmarks	_____	_____	k. Agricultural Lands	_____	_____
f. Endangered Plants and Animals (to be completed by DCR)					
5. **Historic and Archaeological Resources (See Grant Award Conditions, pg. 8)** Y N
 - a. Has the project been reviewed by the VA Dept. of Historic Resources (DHR)? _____
 - b. Will the project have an effect on historic or archaeological resources? _____
 - c. If the project has an effect on historic or archaeological resources, has the effect been coordinated by the DCR? _____
6. **Hazardous Wastes:** Is there are potential for involvement with hazardous wastes? _____
7. **Noise:** Is there potential for the project to have a noise impact on surrounding land uses? _____
8. **Air Quality:** Will the project have an adverse impact on air quality? _____
9. **Section 4(f)**
 - a. Is the project located on a publicly owned park, recreational area, historic site, or Wildlife and waterfowl refuge? _____
 - b. If yes, please mark the appropriate box and name the facility.
Park* _____
Recreation Area* _____
Historic Site _____
Wildlife/Waterfowl Refuge _____

**If the applicant is not the official having jurisdiction over the park or recreation area, a letter must be attached from a responsible official(s) stating approval, that the project is acceptable and consistent with the designated use*

of the property, and that the said official is satisfied that the applicant has committed to include measures to minimize environmental impact.

To be completed by Project Applicant

Any response in a box requires additional information prior to approval. On additional pages please provide as much information as possible on the potential impacts.

Form prepared by: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by DCR

DCR has reviewed the above referenced information and concurs with the information provided by the applicant. It is DCR's opinion that the proposed project will have no significant impacts on the environment.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by FWHA

Recommended: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Negative Declaration/Section 4(f) Statement for Projects in Parks and Recreation Areas.

Based on the above information and scope of the project, it is determined that the proposed recreational trail project will not have a significant effect upon the quality of the human environment and meets the requirements of a negative declaration/Section 4(f) statement as published in the Federal Register (42 F.R. 15394) on March 21, 1997. It is our determination that (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of Section 4(f) lands, and (2) the conditions for approval will insure that the trail facility proposals will include all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from such use.

Division Administrator: _____ Date: _____